

STRATHCONA COMMUNITY GARDEN

www.strathconagardens.ca

Strathcona Community Garden is a volunteer- managed public green space on 1.35 hectares (3.34 acres) of city land in Vancouver Eastside. Local residents began transforming the site from an informal dump in 1985. Recognizing its role as a leader in community-run ecological stewardship, the Park Board signed in 2005 a 25 year lease with the Strathcona Community Gardeners Society, a non - profit charitable organization which members join each year to renew their garden plots.

The garden exists to:

- provide space for area residents to grow their own organic food, herbs and flowers
- offer rare inner city habitat space for wildlife
- educate gardeners and the community on organic food techniques, composting and other urban ecological skills
- maintain an urban oasis for all residents and visitors to enjoy

FEATURES OF THE STRATHCONA GARDEN

1. Eco-Pavilion

The Eco-Pavilion, built in 1997 by young women learning trades on an EYA job training program, provides space for meetings, workshops, and other events. The building was created using sustainable and reclaimed material and incorporates natural systems such as solar power, rain water collection, grey water cleansing as well as a composting toilet. It has kitchen amenities with cold and hot water available during the growing season. Rental procedures for the Eco-Pavilion are available on the Garden's website (www.strathconagardens.ca)

2. Greenhouse

The garden's greenhouse was built in 2010 through EYA, the Environmental Youth Alliance, and shelf space is shared between the gardeners and EYA. Gardeners interested in growing their own seeds can discuss greenhouse protocols and availability with an EYA representative.

3. Storage sheds / Nursery

There are 2 secure storage sheds for supplies and other tools shared by the gardeners. Fruit trees and other plants are stored in the nursery lock-up until ready for planting.

4. Bee Shed and Bee Hive

Built in 1995, the bee shed provides an onsite location to harvest honey that is offered for sale first to interested gardeners.

5. Espalier Area

The espalier area demonstrates the potential to grow a variety of fruit even in a limited space. Some of the apples seen here are heritage varieties dating back centuries.

6. Orchard

Together with the Espalier area, more than 30 types of fruit trees are grown in the garden, including apple, pear, plum, quince, fig, berries and much more.

7. Herb Garden

The herb garden, based on a Tibetan Buddhist Mandela design with “gates” in four directions, holds a variety of herbs and roses. A small pool in the middle of the herb garden has become a popular drinking spot for bees.

8. Wildlife Habitat

The Wildlife Habitat area, including a seasonal winter pond, features native trees and plants to help create a natural preserve for wildlife.

9. Children’s Play area

A small sand box is available for children.

10. Garden Plots

The garden has approximately 200 plots for residents to grow organic food. Several raised beds are available for those with physical /mobility limitations.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

GARDEN COMMITTEE

The Garden Committee, open to all members in good standing, holds monthly meetings to plan the mandatory work parties and discuss issues including the revision of policies and procedures, the resolution of grievances and any other topics of interest to the gardeners. Gardeners are encouraged to attend these meetings to voice their opinions and to participate in the decision making process. Meeting minutes are recorded and e-mailed monthly to all the gardeners.

PLOT ASSIGNMENT

Aspiring gardeners are advised to attend a work party (last Sunday of every month except December) where they can add their name to the waiting list for a garden plot. Plots are assigned on a first come, first served basis.

PLOT ALLOCATION

Garden plots are approximately 5' X 15 ' and are assigned to an individual gardener/couple/ family of the same address. Members who have been gardeners in good standing may request additional plots if available; a maximum of 4 plots can be allocated to an individual gardener/couple/family. Plots may not be traded, sub-let or registered to someone "in name only" while a friend or relative uses the space. All plots assignment are made solely by the Garden Coordinator.

MEMBERSHIP FEE

The annual membership fee of \$10.00 is due when plots are assigned or renewed at the work party on the last Sunday in January.

PLOT RENTAL FEES

The plot rental fee is \$ 5.00 per year. Renewal of plots and membership fees are due at the January work party. Gardeners unable to attend this work party who want to keep their plot (s) need to notify the Treasurer to make arrangements for payment. All current and new gardeners must sign a membership application form that includes agreeing to the rules of the Garden.

TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP

Gardeners may terminate their membership at any time by informing the Garden Coordinator or sending an e-mail to the Garden website indicating they are relinquishing their plot(s).

Gardeners may have their memberships terminated for:

- not paying membership / plot fees
- taking produce , tools or other material from another gardener's plot or the common areas without authorization
- being involved in unlawful activity at the garden
- not tending to their assigned plot
- not joining the mandatory work parties (or a substitute agreed upon by the Garden Coordinator)

PLOT INSPECTIONS

The Garden Coordinator will assign a team of gardeners to conduct inspections of individual plots during the growing season to ensure that they are planted and tended. If a plot appears to have been abandoned, the gardener will be asked whether he/she wishes to keep it. If yes, the gardener will need to provide a time frame indicating when the plot will be tended.

PLOT MAINTENANCE

Plots are to be cultivated by May 1st of each year

Plots are to be cultivated regularly during the growing season.

Only organic methods (no synthetic fertilizers or pesticides) are to be used.

Compost material are to be stored in enclosed plastic bins only; gardeners may not build their own compost bins. Cold frames in plots are allowed.

All plots are to be cleared of excessive debris by December 1st, except for those growing winter crops or perennials.

No fences or structures may be erected on an individual garden plot as per the agreement between the Park Board and the Garden's Society.

Hazardous materials may not be stored in plots.

Gardeners may not grow plants or trees that will shade their neighbors' plots

Gardeners are responsible to weed the paths bordering their individual plots.

WORK PARTIES

The Strathcona Community Garden includes a large common area that requires ongoing maintenance to keep the entire area beautiful. There are 11 work parties per year, from January to November. Gardeners are required to participate in at least 8 work parties (or the equivalent) to remain in good standing. Gardeners are asked to sign in at each work party to keep records of participation.

The Garden Coordinator supervises the work parties and assigns tasks needing attention at a particular time. Gardeners are also invited to either sign up or take on a leadership role for a specific area of interest such as, the Orchard, Herb Garden, Compost area, Raised Beds, etc.

Members unable to attend a work party are to select a substitute task, as noted on the garden website, and to notify the Garden Coordinator, via the website, once the task has been completed; this will be count as a work party sign-in.

Members who do not attend a minimum of 8 work parties / substitute tasks per year may forfeit their right to have their plot renewed the following year.

SECURITY AND SAFETY

The Strathcona Community Garden wants a safe and secure environment for gardeners and visitors alike. All members are asked to be vigilant to prevent theft and vandalism.

Please be vigilant about visitors roaming the Garden; acquaint yourself with your fellow gardeners and notify the police if you see any suspicious activity.

The washroom facilities are for the gardeners' use; a public washroom is available in the field house in Strathcona Park, across from Hawks street.

Each year, new keypad codes for the sheds will be provided to gardeners upon renewal of plots. Please do not provide these, as well as the washroom code, to non-gardeners ; lock the tool sheds immediately after each use.

Children are most welcome to the gardens; however, please do supervise them closely as there is much drug paraphernalia such as needles that are left behind.

A workshop on the safe handling of needles is regularly provided to the gardeners; written procedures as well as a bucket to safely store needles are located in the tool shed.

WATER

Water is provided for all plots; gardeners are asked to be in attendance when watering their plot and to follow water-wise practices to minimize waste.

To lessen the threat of West Nile virus and mosquito breeding areas, do not leave water in any open containers.

In case of water damage to the water system, or apparent leakage, turn off the water supply at the Main Water Pipe Shut Off if possible and immediately notify one of the gardeners whose phone numbers are located inside the tool shed by Hawks street. The location of the Garden Main Water Pipe shut off valve is posted inside the same shed.

RECYCLING

Recycling of material is supported; however, use of items such as discarded shipping pallets, rubber tires, etc, that are not appropriate for a garden environment are not allowed.

GARDEN MEMBER AGREEMENT

A Garden Member Agreement must be signed upon the allocation of a plot each year.

STRATHCONA GARDEN AGREEMENT

As a gardener of the Strathcona Community Garden I agree to the following:

1. To garden organically without the use of synthetic fertilizers or pesticides.
2. To grow food, flowers or herbs for my own personal use and not for sale.
3. To annually participate in at least 8 work parties held the last Sunday of the month from 9:30 to 1:00.
4. To cultivate my plot and to keep the paths around it trimmed and weeded; to keep my crops confined to my own area; to avoid planting crops/ trees that will shade adjacent plots.
5. To treat communal garden tools with care which includes washing off soil after each use and winding up hoses before storing in the shed; to lock tool sheds after each use and to not keep communal tools in my own garden plot.
6. To seek permission and approval from the Garden Committee before changing or modifying any aspect of the garden's common areas.

PRIVACY

Personal information is kept confidential and is only available to the Board of Directors; phone numbers will be provided to the volunteer gardeners who phone members for a reminder of work parties. All other information may only be released upon the consent of the member.

Name (PLEASE PRINT)

Signature

Date

Street address

City

Postal code

E-mail address

Home phone

Cell phone

I allow my e-mail address to be shared with other garden members Yes____ No____

DO NOT COMPLETE THIS SECTION

Membership fee and plot fees paid: \$

Plot # (s) _____

Date plot (s) allocated _____

Signature of Board Secretary or Treasurer:

